

## HB 3208 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Human Services and Housing

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**Action Date:** 04/08/19

**Action:** Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

**Vote:** 8-0-1-0

**Yeas:** 8 - Helt, Meek, Mitchell, Noble, Sanchez, Schouten, Williams, Zika

**Exc:** 1 - Keny-Guyer

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

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**Meeting Dates:** 3/20, 4/8

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#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop two- and five-year plans for comprehensive funding of child welfare services and staff, due in draft form, to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2019, and final by September 15, 2020. Requires DHS to study provisions of state law relating to investigation of abuse of children in child-caring agencies, proctor foster homes, certified foster homes, or developmental disabilities residential facilities. Requires DHS to make recommendations to amend or repeal Oregon laws to adopt a child abuse investigation framework consistent with national models for child safety investigations. Outlines focus of recommendations and that recommendations may incorporate a graduated system of enforcement. Requires DHS to report to appropriate interim committees of the Legislative Assembly no later than September 15, 2019. Requires DHS to assist child abuse investigators beginning January 1, 2020, and to report annually to Legislative Assembly regarding same with recommendations to minimize trauma, as specified. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

#### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Chronic underfunding of child welfare system
- Inadequate supports, interventions, and investments at front end resulting in increased costs later
- Repeat trauma, out-of-state placement, lawsuits, and inability of both state and nonprofit service entities to recruit and retain employees or sustain programs
- Failure to help children who are unable to help themselves, especially high-needs children

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Requires Department of Human Services (DHS) to study provisions of state law relating to investigation of abuse of children child-caring agencies, proctor foster homes, certified foster homes, or developmental disabilities residential facilities. Requires DHS to make recommendations to amend or repeal Oregon laws to adopt a child abuse investigation framework consistent with national models for child safety investigations. Outlines focus of recommendations and that recommendations may incorporate a graduated system of enforcement. Requires DHS to report to appropriate interim committees of the Legislative Assembly no later than September 15, 2019.

#### BACKGROUND:

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is the state's principal agency in support of Oregonians who are least able to help themselves, including the most vulnerable populations. DHS administers programs that provide food assistance, cash assistance, child care assistance, services for victims of domestic violence, assistance for children with developmental disabilities, services for seniors, services for adults with disabilities, and more. DHS assists more than a million Oregonians every year.

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DHS' child welfare offices are concerned with adoption assistance, foster care, helping foster parents and caregivers who are relatives, investigating child abuse and neglect, and services that transition youth to independent living. Child welfare programs serve some of Oregon's most vulnerable children: they may be in need of protection, dependent, neglected, abused, threatened, mentally or physically disabled, and court-ordered into DHS' custody. Child welfare caseworkers provide direct services through a network of local offices in every county in Oregon.

House Bill 3208-A directs DHS to develop two- and five-year plans for comprehensive funding of child welfare services and staff, study national models of child abuse investigations, and imposes a number of related reporting requirements.